

TETANUS

I. IDENTIFICATION

- A. **CLINICAL DESCRIPTION:** A disease with an acute onset of hypertonia (extreme tension of the muscles) and/or painful muscular contractions (usually of the muscles of the jaw and neck) and generalized muscle spasms without other apparent medical cause, following the contamination of a wound with *Clostridium tetani*.
- B. **REPORTING CRITERIA:** Clinical diagnosis.
- C. **KENTUCKY CASE DEFINITION:** A clinically compatible illness, as reported by a health-care professional.

II. ACTIONS REQUIRED / PREVENTION MEASURES

- A. **KENTUCKY DISEASE SURVEILLANCE REQUIRES URGENT NOTIFICATION:** REPORT TO THE LOCAL OR STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT **IMMEDIATELY** upon recognition of a case or suspected case in a period not greater than 24 hours. If health department personnel cannot be contacted directly, notification shall be made by electronic submission or by telephone to the emergency number of the Division of Epidemiology and Health Planning: **1-888-973-7678**.
- B. **EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORTS REQUESTED:**
1. Kentucky Reportable Disease Form – EPID 200 (Jan/03).
 2. Tetanus Surveillance Case Report - (CDC 71.15).
 3. Tetanus Surveillance Worksheet - (CDC).
- C. **PREVENTION MEASURES:**
- Tetanus toxoid administered with diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine as a triple antigen for children <7 years of age. Routinely administer initial series at 2, 4 and 6 months and booster doses at 12-18 months of age and before school entry (at 4-6 years of age).
 - Active protection should be maintained by administering booster doses of Td (tetanus diphtheria) every 10 years.
 - Protection with vaccine is recommended for workers in contact with soil, sewage, domestic animals, members of the military forces, policemen and others with greater than usual risk of traumatic injury and older adults who are currently at highest risk of tetanus.
- D. **PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS:**
- Case investigation to determine circumstances of the wound and history of tetanus vaccination.

III. CONTACTS FOR CONSULTATION

- A. KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
BRANCH: 502-564-3261.
- B. KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, SURVEILLANCE AND
HEALTH DATA BRANCH: 502-564-3418.

IV. RELATED REFERENCES

1. Chin, James, ed. TETANUS. In: Control of Communicable Diseases Manual. 17th ed.
Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 2000: 491 -495.
2. Pickering, LK, ed. Tetanus. In: 2000 Red Book: Report of the Committee on Infectious
Diseases. 25th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000: 563-
568.
3. Tetanus Surveillance - United States, 1991-1994. MMWR 1997; 46(No.SS-2): 15-25.
4. Use of Diphtheria Toxoid-Tetanus Toxoid- Acellular Pertussis Vaccine as a Five-Dose
Series: Supplemental Recommendations of the ACIP; MMWR 2000: 49 (No. RR-13):
1-8.